

Proposed Erection of 68 Bedroom Hotel and Restaurant with Associated Landscaping

Promenade, Spanish City, Whitley Bay



design & access statement

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1.0 introduction

- 1.1 The following report is a design and access statement for a new Premier Inn hotel and restaurant proposed by Robertson Property Development for a site adjacent Spanish City, Whitley Bay. A 68 bedroom hotel is proposed with associated restaurant, bar, and landscaping. The proposed car parking which will serve the development is located within an area currently in the ownership of North Tyneside Council. Planning permission was received by the Council on 19th December 2014 for the creation of formal car park on this land to the south-west of the Spanish City (planning application reference : 14/01727/LAREG3) to provide 132 standard parking spaces and 11 accessible bays.
- 1.2 The text is accompanied by a combination of photos and images prepared through the design stages, and presented to and discussed with North Tyneside Development Control Department as well as the Regeneration Team during the pre-application discussions.

2.0 site and context

- 2.1 The site is located on the seafront in Whitley Bay adjacent the former funfair at Spanish City (see figure 1) which is currently being refurbished by the Robertson Group and is part of the larger Whitley Bay Seafront Masterplan, a regeneration project along the stretch of coastline between St Mary's Island and Cullercoats Bay. The current works in and around the Spanish City include the above mentioned car-park, re-alignment of the access road to provide better pedestrian links and enhance the setting as well as the refurbishment of the dome and building itself.



Fig 1 : aerial view of the site

- 2.2 The site extends to 0.2958 ha (0.73 acres) and is bounded to the east by the promenade and North Sea, to the west by the realigned Links Road, and Spanish City to the north.

- 2.3 The site is currently vacant and generally flat with works underway to create the carpark and adjacent landscaping (figs 2, 3 & 4). A vehicular service road will extend past the site to service both the hotel and restaurant as well as the rear of the adjacent bingo hall.



Fig 2 : view of ongoing car parking works



Fig 3 : view of ongoing car parking works



Fig 4 : view of ongoing car parking works

- 2.4 The Whitley Bay Seafront Master Plan sets out North Tyneside Council's ambitious plans to reinvigorate the area between St Mary's Lighthouse and Cullercoats Bay. The proposals are a mix of council and private sector developments and involve more than £36 million of new investment at the coast.

3.2 The key points of reference are the Promenade improvements, the contextual dialogue with the neighbouring buildings and in particular the Spanish City Dome (fig 7 and 8) and the access road re-alignment and new pedestrian link.



Fig 7 : view of Spanish City from west



Fig 8 : view of Spanish City from east

4.0 use and massing

4.1 The Whitley Bay Seafront Master Plan sets out the framework which development should adhere to. Outline planning approval, granted in August 2013 includes a proposal for a new hotel and restaurant and this has been included within the master plan.

4.2 The hotel will be three storeys in height with a single storey restaurant. This is in-keeping with the massing of the adjacent Spanish City building, ensuring that both complement one another whilst ensuring that the dome itself remains a prominent landmark.

4.3 The hotel and restaurant sit at the front of the site with almost uninterrupted views overlooking the promenade and the North Sea (fig 9 & 10). The frontage of the hotel sits comfortably alongside the frontage of Spanish City, reinforcing the urban edge. The car parking is discreetly located to the side and rear of the buildings allowing easy access from the realigned road.

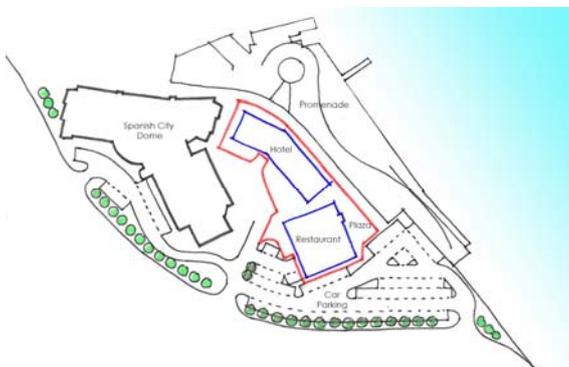


Fig 9 : early layout study



Fig 10 : development layout study

- 4.4 The restaurant sits as a stand-alone building with a link through to the hotel. This gives the restaurant its own identity and encourages use by the general public to help draw visitors regularly to the area and create a new destination on the seafront.
- 4.5 The proposals include an external plaza space in front of the restaurant and hotel entrance. This provides an external space for use during summer months by the restaurant that in turn will help activate the promenade.

5.0 building proposals

- 5.1 The proposal including hotel and restaurant comprises 1,365 sq m gross internal floor area spread over 3 storeys. The active ground floor comprises a reception area, bar and restaurant. Bedrooms are spread across all three storeys with universally accessible rooms on the ground floor.
- 5.2 The building is simple in form and robust and contemporary in appearance. Parapet walls conceal flat roofs to enhance this aesthetic. Robust materials suitable for a marine environment have been carefully chosen. The building is clad predominantly in red facing brick to reflect the existing residential properties nearby. The stair towers are clad in a smooth white render to contrast with the brickwork. Pre-patinised green copper standing seam cladding is used to help announce and enhance the hotel and restaurant entrances (fig 11). This matches the green copper ornamental spire that tops the Spanish City Dome.



fig 11 : Northeast elevation - restaurant

- 5.3 The hotel has effectively been designed as a linear building in line with the Premier Inn standard model. A central corridor serves rooms on either side with vertical circulation at each end. This model achieves an efficient building footprint, meeting the Client's commercial aspirations. The plan however has been cranked, creating a faceted curve to the front of the building that follows the promenade and addresses the building line of Spanish City (fig 12). The restaurant has been designed as a simple box.

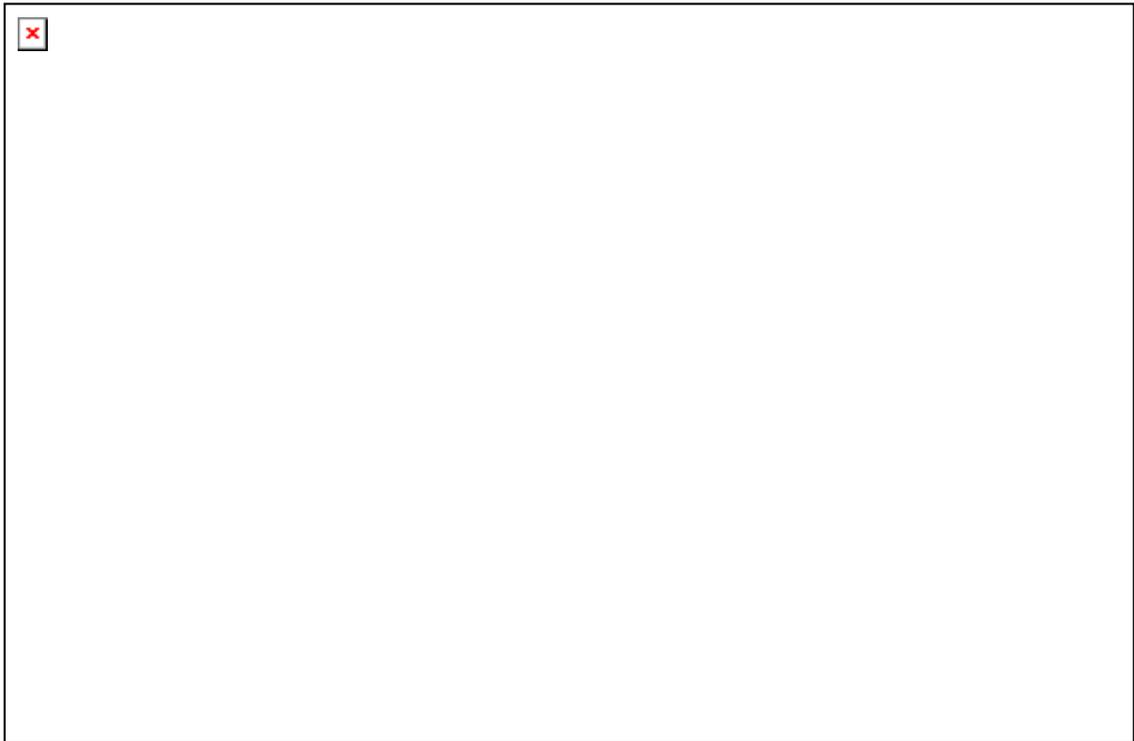


fig 12 : proposed site plan

- 5.4 The principles of the building design are also dictated by the use. The regularity of window openings for a hotel has been addressed with the use of an offset window arrangement. Extensive full height glazing to the ground floor highlights the main entrance and reception (fig 13).



fig 13 : Northeast elevation - Hotel

- 5.5 Larger full height glazing to the restaurant allows panoramic views across the promenade to the North Sea whilst also providing visual transparency and an active element to the ground floor and external plaza space. This is focused towards the promenade and new pedestrian link from the car park. High quality landscaping and seating encourages restaurant use and provides a range of dining experiences for guests. Spandrel units above further emphasise the openings and give the restaurant a civic presence (fig 11 & 14).



fig 14 : image of restaurant and external plaza



fig 15 : image of hotel entrance and external plaza

- 5.6 Servicing and back of house facilities are located to the rear of both the hotel and restaurant with their own dedicated access. These areas are screened to ensure that the overall design remains clean and simple. This allows servicing, deliveries and refuse collection to be segregated from the public areas and they can be carried out discreetly. The main hotel stair tower extends to discreetly conceal rooftop plant.
- 5.7 The restaurant and hotel will be operating at their peak during the evening. The restaurant in particular will be visually stimulating to pedestrians utilising the Promenade and will increase the pedestrian experience. In the evenings the extensive glazing will illuminate providing visual activity. Lighting will be subject to specific detailed consideration and signage will be subject to a separate planning application in the usual manner.

5.8 The design and specification of the proposal has been influenced by pre-application discussions with the Council's Planning Department and the County Historic Buildings Officer to ensure that the layout, design, materials and orientation of the building are consistent with the masterplan and appropriate for the site.

6.0 access statement

6.1 Access for less able users has been considered and provided throughout the proposals with inclusivity an important aspect of the design. The car park contains eight universally accessible parking bays and these are located near to the restaurant and hotel entrance. Each universally accessible parking bay is 5 m x 2.5 m with a 1.2 m wide safety zone behind the car for boot access and cars with rear hoists.



6.2 Each space also has a 1.2 m wide marked access zone between the designated parking spaces; which shared between two parking spaces. In addition each space has a dropped kerb or level access to allow unobstructed access.



6.3 The site levels around the building have been set to ensure that access to the building can be negotiated easily by all persons regardless of ability, without assistance. The site is flat and fully compliant gradients can be achieved easily. The buildings sit 150mm above finished ground level with the external ground levels raised slightly at the entrances to provide level access.

6.4 Changes in surface texture will be incorporated where appropriate to aid those with visual impairments.

6.5 The external and lobby doors of both the hotel and restaurant are fully automatic and are operated by motion sensors allowing unassisted access. The provision of these doors allows wheelchair bound and ambulant disabled guest's access into the building without the need for assistance.

6.6 The hotel accommodation includes three universally accessible bedrooms with wheelchair accessible en-suite wet-rooms. These are located on the ground floor beside the reception for ease of access.

6.7 The upper floors of the hotel are served by two public lifts both of which can accommodate a wheelchair user, allowing access for all users regardless of ability.

7.0 public realm and landscaping

7.1 Throughout the design process the public realm and landscaping proposals have been integral to the overall design philosophy.

7.2 As part of the Whitley Bay Seafront Master Plan the surrounding areas are currently being upgraded and improved to regenerate the area and attract visitors and businesses to the area to encourage social interaction and economic growth. Improvements include public realm works to the promenade including hard

landscaping to improve access and encourage use through the provision of seating and an amphitheatre (fig16). A new pedestrian link as part of the car parking proposals extends a pedestrian desire line, linking Whitley Park and Park Avenue with the promenade.



fig 16 : image of promenade amphitheatre with hotel and plaza in the background

- 7.3 The external plaza outside the restaurant and hotel entrance will be finished with high quality robust materials to compliment the promenade improvements. This will encourage the more public functions on the ground floors to spill out and activate this space. The plaza is located at the end of the new pedestrian link and acts as a destination at the termination of this route (fig 12 & 13).
- 7.4 A soft landscaping strip of seagrass has been proposed to the front of the hotel. This compliments the soft landscaping that will be used within the car parking proposals and acts as a privacy buffer to the ground floor hotel rooms. This also helps ground the building in its context. Seagrass has been chosen to withstand the harsh climate of the coastal site.
- 7.5 A high quality external lighting scheme will be incorporated into the proposals however this will be subject to a separate application in the normal manner.
- 8.0 **conclusion**
- 8.1 Consultation with the planning department and urban design panel have positively influenced the emerging design. We therefore believe that the submitted design is appropriate for the site and responds positively to its urban context.